

Questions and Answers about the NOS Orientation and Training Program

1. Who within NOS will responsible for the overall management and staff support for the Program?

Answer: The Management and Budget Office will be responsible for oversight and overall coordination of the Program. Sloane Strother will be the Program Manager and will give a short briefing to incoming employees at each NOAA Orientation.

2. What is the minimum expectation of each NOS Program Office with respect to the Program – are there a minimum set of items that each Office should address as part of its own orientation for new employees?

Answer: Each office should assign a “Buddy” to each new employee and develop a line office Orientation separate from the NOS orientation. The Line Office Orientation should give an overview of the Office mission and operational details, in addition to how it relates to the overall NOS/NOAA mission. The Office Orientation should be given prior to the NOS Orientation.

3. When will the NOS Orientation occur and what is the time commitment for each new employee? Will it be coincident with the Human Resources orientation on the first day or be a separate activity?

Answer: A short NOS Orientation briefing will be given by Sloane Strother on the same day as the HMRO Orientation noting the day, time, and location of the NOS Orientation. The NOS Orientation will be an activity separate from the HMRO Orientation and will be conducted on a monthly basis, near the end of each month. John Oliver and Mary Leach will alternate as facilitators of the NOS Orientation. In addition, there will be a Feedback/Evaluation meeting every six months by year class to see how things are going for the new employees.

4. The Program proposal includes a NOS “Buddy” program for new employees. How will these staff be identified? How long will the “Buddies” need to be available to new employees (6 months, a year)?

Answer: Each Office Director or Deputy Director will assign a Buddy to each new employee. The Buddy should be within the same Program Office as the new employee, be a 5 year employee or more, and have qualities conducive to the role of a “Buddy” (i.e. personable, patient, approachable). The Buddy should be available for the first 6 months of employment of the new employee.

5. What will be expected of the NOS “Buddy” – will this person be expected to be a career advisor and sounding board or will they serve only as a source of information?

Answer: The NOS Buddy will serve as a personal reference and guide for the new employee to consult with questions about employment, personnel issues, the Campus, etc. The Buddy is not intended to be a career mentor.

6. How will the Program address needs of NOS field offices? Will there be a separate program for new field employees or will their orientation be integrated with the HQ program?

Answer: Though this hasn’t been completely worked out, NOS envisions bringing new employees to Silver Spring at some point during the first year for the NOS Orientation. They will already have received the Field Office Orientation at the Field Office location.

7. How much will the new NOS Program cost and how will that cost be apportioned among the program offices?

Answer: Costs are anticipated to be minimal and largely in the form of time rather than materials.